

REMARKS

Claims 7-8, 10-13, 16 and 18-21 are pending in the present application. Claims 7, 8, 10-13, 16 and 18-20 have been amended and claims 22 and 23 have been canceled.

Applicant notes with appreciation the indication by the Examiner that claims 8, 10-12, and 18-21 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims and that claims 7, 13 and 16 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Drawings/Specification

Figures 21-24 are objected to because they are not designated by the legend "Prior Art." In addition, the drawings are also objected to because of various informalities noted in the Office Action.

In response, Applicants are submitting concurrently herewith replacement drawings. In particular, the following changes have been made to the drawings:

- 1) Figures 2a-2c, 3a-3c, 11 and 12 have been canceled;
- 2) The remaining 3 figures have been renumbered as Figures 1-20;
- 3) Figure 17-20 (previously Figures 21-24) have been labeled "Prior Art;" and
- 4) Figure 9 (previously Figure 13) has been amended to include Figure 9(f).

An annotated copy of Figure 9 is provided to show the changes made therein.

In addition, the disclosure has been amended to reference the renumbered figure numbers and to address the deficiencies noted in the Office Action. A substitute specification, excluding claims, is included herein in accordance with 37 CFR 1.125. A clean version and a marked up version that shows all changes in the specification relative

to the previous version is included herein. Applicant respectfully submits that the substitute specification does not contain any new matter.

In addition, in the Office Action, the disclosure was objected to in ¶6(i) because it was not clear what the “first embodiment” is. Applicant respectfully submits that the first embodiment is set forth beginning on page 12, line 22 of the specification and thus it can be determined that the “first embodiment” referenced on page 21, line 15 (line and page numbers referring to the clean version of the substitute specification) refers back to this “first embodiment.”

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 7-8, 10-13, 16 and 18-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph for reasons set forth on pages 5 and 6 of the Office Action.

In response, Applicant has amended the claims to address the deficiencies noted in the Office Action. In addition, in ¶8(d), the Office Actions states that it is not clear what is meant by “the state.” In response, Applicant has amended the claims to recite that “the state” is state of damage of the cutting blade, in that the method comprises the step of detecting a state of damage of the cutting blade prior to step (B). This limitation is clearly set forth in the specification, for example at page 23, lines 4-11 and thus no new matter is believed to have been added by virtue of this amendment.

Applicant believes that the claim amendments contained herein address all of the deficiencies noted in the Office Action. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 7-8, 10-13, 16 and 18-23 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite is earnestly solicited.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102/§103

Claims 22 and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by EP 1072860 in view of Bauer and claim 23 stands rejected as being unpatentable over Evans in view of Bauer (U.S. Pat. No. 5,217,244) and Bauer (U.S. Pat. No. 5,744,776).

As indicated above, Applicant has canceled claims 22 and 23 and thus these rejections are believed to be moot.

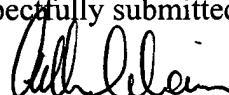
CONCLUSION

Applicant believes that the foregoing is a full and complete response to the Office Action of record. Accordingly, an early and favorable reconsideration of all of the claims is requested. Applicant believes that claims 7-8, 10-13, 16 and 18-21 are now in condition for allowance and an indication of allowability and an early Notice of Allowance of all of the claims is respectfully requested.

If Examiner feels that a telephonic interview would be helpful, he is requested to call the undersigned at (203) 575-2629 prior to the issuance of the next office action.

Respectfully submitted,

By:


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